25: Brodrick--12 S-3 (1939) 1948 Laotians
631, 642

"Constitutions were adopted in 1947 for both Cambodia and the Laos, but in the latter country the sovereign has rather more power than in the former. All the public acts of H. M. King Norodom Sihanouk of Cambodia must be countersigned by the Prime Minister and another member of the Cabinet. Only one countersignature is required in the Laos where, moreover, when Parliament is not sitting the monarch may govern by decrees which, however, must be ratified later by the elected representatives of the people.

After the Japanese surrender the 'Free Laotians' (protected by the Chinese army of occupation) secured the abdication of King Sisavong Vong of Luang Prabang. A 'constitutional' government was then set up which restored the King as the ruler of an independent Laos comprising not only his former kingdom of Luang Prabang, but all the Laotian territories of Indo-China."

73: Hammer--240 S-4 (no date) 1951 Laotians
116, 642, 648, 727, 177.64 France
636.64

"In Laos, as in Vietnam, the Chinese occupation had provided a protective screen behind which a nationalist regime had consolidated itself in power. A Free Laotian movement forced the abdication of King Sisavong Vong, set up its own more representative government, and then brought him back to the throne as the constitutional leader of an independent country. Only after the Chinese withdrew could the French return to Laos, and the Chinese troops were in no haste to leave. China did not withdraw the last of its troops from Indochina until midsummer of 1946. The French promised Laos, as they had Cambodia, to restore the areas taken by Thailand in 1941; (8) and in both countries they

8. On November 17, 1946 the French signed an agreement to this effect with Thailand in regard to both Laotian and Cambodian territory.

played upon the fear of Vietnamese and Thai aggression. On August 27, 1946 they signed an agreement with Laos (recognizing the union of the country under Sisavong Vong, formerly king only of Luang Prabang) much like that with Cambodia, by which they restored the prewar protectorate in modifiedbut not radically changed form."

of Ayuthya. /45/ And even before it disappeared it had been supplanted by Vientiane, which was built some ten kilometers upstream, unless the two cities formed a single immense one or unless the first one moved without changing its name at first 175* 633 648* 631

Capture of Phaï-Nam (Vientiane) Whatever the case may be, the center of resistance against Fa-Ngoun was then called "Phaï-Nam" (thorny bamboos) because of the impenetrable vegetable belt which defended it like veritable ramparts. It resisted repeated assaults and Fa-Ngoun was able to get the better of it only by using a ruse. He had gold and silver projectiles shot at the bamboo enclosure and then simulated a retreat. The besieged army, seeing the royal troops fall back, thought that their delivery was at hand and came out to pick up the precious projectiles. Then the assailants suddenly returned to the charge and entered the city without difficulty (1). Phaya-Phao had to make his submission. 643* 721 175* 725 633 631

1. These tactics are celebrated in several Thaï legends to explain the capture of a stronghold.

He received his pardon and was kept on as governor of the principality.

In memory of this episode, the city was baptized /46/ "Vien-Kham" which signifies "gold enclosure." This was later corrupted to "Vientiane" (sandalwood enclosure) (1)

1. There is permanent confusion in the Laotian chronicles between the Vien-Kham on the banks of the Mékong and the Vien-Kham in Tran-Ninh.

Formation of the kingdom of Lan-Xang (1353). Fa-Ngoun, henceforth the uncontested master of a vast kingdom, gave it a strong organization and ruled over it as a despot. 643* 175* 642

He summoned an Oupahat or second king to him to assist him in his political duties and instituted a Council of ministers chosen from the princes of royal blood and arranged in a hierarchy according to their respective ranks and attributions. But he would suffer no infringement on his own authority, neither at court or in the provinces. He took terrible reprisals against the vassals who did not obey his orders blindly, and replaced nearly all of them in succession with mere governors as the fancy took him. /646/

643* 175* 642 Complaints against such tyranny, which had heretofore been unknown in the region of Lan-Xang, reached his father-in-law the king of Cambodia. The latter summoned his son-in-law to Angkor and in the name of the Buddhist precepts advised him to use /47/ moderation and "pity towards the weak" (1). Fa-Ngoun seemed to accept the

1. According to Auguste Pavie's translators, Fa-Ngoun was content merely to send an embassy to Angkor at the request of Queen Nang-Kéo.

lesson, was baptized in accordance with the rites of the Hinayana and himself urged that a Cambodian mission composed of clergymen, scholars and artisans be sent to Muong-Swa. Pha-Maha-Pasaman-Théla-Tiao, the head of the mission, brought the sacred books of orthodox Buddhism and a statue of Buddha which had been given to the Kmer sovereign by the king of Ceylon in the ninth century. This statue was the Prabang, which became the palladium of the kingdom of Lan-Xang (2).

2. When the mission passed through Vientiane the governor Phao is supposed to have requested and obtained the right to keep the statue in the city for three years. Many legends recount the voyage of the Prabang in diverse manners and disagree as to the route followed. Here again it may be a question of the Vien-Kham in Tran-Ninh.

346 175* 643* 103 The Prabang. When they reached their destination the Kmer workers began the construction of a temple, the Vat-Gnot-Kéo, where the Prabang was solemnly placed in 1358. But it was not until two centuries later, when the seat of the capital was transferred to Vientiane by the king Setthathirat (1563), that the name of Luang-Prabang was given to the city.

643* 175* 631 /48/ When he returned to his States Fa-Ngoun proclaimed himself Supreme Chief of religion and resumed, with a severe hand although never exceeding the bounds of firmness, the administration of the various territories which then made up the kingdom of Lan-Xang. These were, namely, Muong-Swa in the strict sense; Xieng-Khong in the north (present region of Houei-Sai); Vientiane, Hoi-Luang and Xieng-La (on the Mékong downstream from Vientiane), Muong-Kabang (Bassac) in the south; Kham-Keut (now the province of Cammon) and Muong-Van (Savannakhet) in the east.

439 after a ten year reign without leaving any sons." He thus explicitly
643* contradicts the native documents which recount the many competitions
175* for the throne which had divided the royal family, and according to which the "present king" succeeded his uncle (Visai).

He adds that the government of the country was divided, under the
175* high authority of the king, between three great officials:

642

645 1. The head of the army who was "governor of the province which produces benzoin" and commander of the city of Vientiane. He doubtless refers to the prime minister Tian-Thala, the son-in-law of Souligna whom he calls Tevinia-Assen;

2. The governor of Nakhone or viceroy, who commanded the whole southern part of the kingdom, including Attopeu, as far as the Cambodian frontier. This was the Nan-Tharath of the Annals, whom he calls Lachaen;

3. The minister of the Palace who is in charge of relations with ambassadors.

These three high officials "were given /110/ an audience only every two or three months, unless there were some necessity or the king had them summoned expressly."

/693/ Next to the king there was a "tribunal in charge of civil and criminal affairs" which was composed of five of his relatives who had daily access to the sovereign.

/651 Finally, Van Wusthof estimates the king's income at "two piculs"
643/* per year of gum lac, benzoin and gold (1).

1. Cf. Georges Maspero, op. cit. /Un empire colonial francais: l'Indochine. Paris, 1929-1930./ A picul was equal to 61 kilograms.

175* The Account of Father Marini (1666). This evocation of the
114 Laotian kingdom in the seventeenth century does not differ appreciably, on the whole, from two travel accounts published in Italian at about the same time by the Jesuit fathers Martini (quoted p. 104, note 2) and Marini. A translation of the latter's accounts was placed on sale in Paris in 1666 (2). No matter how picturesque it may be in its

/127/ 2. Relation nouvelle et curieuse des royaumes de Tonquin et de Laos, traduite de l'italien du P. Marini Romain, par L.P.L.C.C. (F. Lecomte; cel.), a Paris, chez Gervais Clouzier, au Palais, sur les degres, en montant pour aller a

domains after the retreat of the Chinese plunderers who had driven them out. 643* 648* 175*

who made common cause with them and raised an army of six thousand men in Muong-Hou and Muong-Thene, which he placed at their disposition.

The two brothers then returned to Luang-Prabang, attacked it and entered without any difficulty. Indeed Thao-Nong, not feeling able to resist them, had abandoned the city and taken the Prabang to Vientiane. King-Kitsarath at once assumed the title of King of Luang-Prabang and notified Sai-Ong-Hue that he regarded himself henceforth as sole master of the Laotian provinces to the north of Xieng-Khane, leaving "the king of Vientiane" sovereignty over the southern provinces (1707). 643* 642 175*

Schism of Lan-Xang into two kingdoms: Luang-Prabang and Vientiane (1707).

We do not know how Sai-Ong-Hue received this ultimatum which cut off from his kingdom /134/ nearly half of the territory under his authority. Indeed, he was in no position to undertake another large-scale expedition, preoccupied as he doubtless was with strengthening his status in Vientiane itself first, where his Annamite army had perhaps not been received with any great enthusiasm by his new subjects. He therefore had to accept his cousin's ultimatum, and Laos was divided into two independent kingdoms.

In the north was that of Luang-Prabang, which had as its limits Xieng-Khane, Pa-Kau-Dai (Kham-Phe-Khao), the Sip-Song-Chau-Thai (the twelve cantons of the Black River) and six cantons of the Houa-Phans (Thousand Springs). 642 631

In the south was the kingdom of Vientiane, which stretched from Xieng-Khane to Sup-Mi, to the Khone waterfalls, Phou-Sang-Tang-Hoe and Ba-Tam-Tan-Kao.

This was the end of Lan-Xang, for this schism was to be a mortal one. 643* 648*

From that time on the two principalities never ceased being jealous of one another, tearing at one another and increasing their servitude towards foreigners by calling the neighboring princes to their aid in order to recreate, each to his own profit, a Laotian unity which had become impossible by the terms of the old adage: "Every divided kingdom /135/ must perish." It was a fratricidal struggle in 175*

175* easily drove back the Laotian detachments which were sent to
648* meet it and rejoined the main column in the vicinity of Vientiane
726 itself.

The siege of the city lasted four months, and when the Siamese entered the city Ong-Boun had fled with Chao-In, one of his sons (2).

2. According to Prince Damrong, Ong-Boun hid at Kham-Keut. According to His Royal Highness Phanuphanthavongswardja he took refuge in Annam. /Prince Damrong, Guerres siamo-birmanes, Bangkok, 1920. His Royal Highness Phanuphantuvongswardja, Repression de la revolte de Vientiane, Bangkok, 1926./

Chulalok took possession of the territory in the name of his sovereign, left a military occupation force, gave its administration to a governor who settled in the royal palace, and then regained
/778/ Thanabury taking Ong-Boun's children with him and carrying off the Prabang and the Prakeo.

642 Interregnum (1778-1782). Four years passed during which
175* Vientiane lived /157/ in direct dependency on the Siamese government. At Bangkok, in the meantime, Phia-Tak was attracting attention by eccentricities which soon alienated the whole court. Finally this rude warrior went insane, disorders broke loose and General Chakkri, who was on duty in Cambodia, hastily returned to bring the rebels back into obedience. He strengthened the throne to his own profit, for he mounted it under the name of Phra-Phuti-Chao-Luong (June 1, 1782) (1).

1. This king, who is also called Rama the First, was the founder of the present dynasty. He transferred the seat of his government from the right bank of the Menam to the left bank, where he laid the first foundations of modern Bangkok.

648* Submission of Ong-Boun. Ong-Boun gained knowledge of these
175* events in his exile. He also learned that his sons had been kindly treated by the new sovereign, and he then decided to make his submission. The king of Siam displayed clemency, gave the aged prince permission to end his days in his old capital, and gave the government of the principality to his eldest son Chao-Nan.

to Chao-Noi to deliver the fugitive up to him as soon as he entered Chao-Noi's States. 648* 175*

The only alternative was an unpleasant one for the king of Xieng-Khouang, who doubtless regretted, although somewhat tardily, that he had not given more support to his neighbor when there was perhaps still time. To give Anou up would be to expose himself to reprisals from their common suzerain the emperor of Annam, while to conceal his presence in his domain was surely to draw down the immediate wrath of Siam.

Captivity and death of Anou (1831-1835). Losing his head, he met the most immediate threat by arresting Anou and holding him prisoner in /176/ Muong-Soui until the arrival of the Siamese envoy, a Lu chieftain named Chao-Nan (1). The vanquished king 727 643* 175*

1. Up until the end of the eighteenth century the Lus formed an important group in the kingdom of Xieng-Kheng. Their chieftain, the Chao-Fa, who was then a tributary of Burma, had his residence at Muong-Sing. After Phia-Tak's victories over the Burmese, certain Lu families served the Siamese while others dispersed in the mountains of Luang-Prabang and Xieng-Mai and the Chao-Fa settled in Muong-You to remain under the protection of the king of Burma. See below, Chapter VIII, p. 331 (question of the Sip-Song-Panas), and 355. /563/ /636/

was put in golden chains and sent on a richly caparisoned elephant to Bangkok, where he found a luxurious prison which had been prepared to receive him (1831). He remained there for four years and died in circumstances which have remained mysterious (2).

2. Cf. Captain de Pelacot, op. cit. /"Le Tran-Ninh historique." Revue indochinoise, Hanoi, 1896./ Some accounts claim that he poisoned himself. Mgr. Pallegoix relates that he was placed in an iron cage and exposed to the insults of the populace, and that he succumbed to the bad treatment which he had to endure.

Destruction of the kingdom of Vientiane. Siam made an ordinary Siamese province out of the old kingdom of Vientiane, a kind of military frontier land which it called "Lao Phoueun." It would 727 175* /642/

727 be true to say that Phia-Bodin's soldiers left only "the land, the
175* water and the wild beasts of the forest." In accomplishing this
/642/ methodical devastation the Siamese had /177/ pursued a double goal: to repopulate their own territories which the Burmese had razed in the same way fifty years before, and to make sure that Annam would have no interest, in the future, in a region which had been emptied of its inhabitants (1). They completed the organiza-

1. Only a few remote muongs bordering on the mountains of Annam were spared, and their governors hastened to ask protection from the powerful neighboring emperor.

tion of their conquest by creating the hereditary fief of Bassac in the south and offering it to Chao-Houy as a reward for his treachery (2).

2. Chao-Houy reigned for thirteen years and died in 1840 at the age of sixty-three. (Annals of Bassac.)

648* The end of Chao-Noi (1832). Several of Anou's sons, however,
175* (whose names have come down to us: Chao-Phoui, Chao-Xang, Chao-Khi, Chao-Men and Chao-Nou) had been able to reach Hue where they had denounced Chao-Noi's conduct to Minh-Mang. The latter at once summoned the king of Xieng-Khouang to his court.

Chao-Noi realized that the painful hour of explanations had come. This made him all the more anxious to seek evasions, and in his place he sent the governor of Muong-Sen to whom he entrusted rich gifts in the hope of cozening his suzerain. All in vain. The emperor was furious. /178/ He had the delegate thrown into prison and sent a detachment of 1200 men under the command of a general to find Chao-Noi himself. The prince of Tran-Ninh had to resign himself to his departure with all his family, and he appeared before Minh-Mang who brought him to task most severely:

"How could you forget that King Anou was my vassal, and why did you give him up to Siam?"

Chao-Noi knew that his case had been judged in advance and that he was not risking anything, so he did not disguise his thoughts but replied rather insolently:

"I did not deliver up Chao-Anou. The Siamese army pursued him and took him prisoner. You are not ignorant of the fact that the king of Siam threatened anyone who should give support to Vientiane with his vengeance, and you yourself did not aid him.

648* on the left bank of the Mekong and to the islands in the river. A
175* neutral zone twenty-five kilometers wide was created on the right bank of the Mekong. Reparations were awarded us for the attacks on Tong-Xieng-Kham and Outene. And finally, all French subjects and nationals who were being held or had been transported to the right bank were to be returned to us or given permission to return to their homes. France was to occupy Chantaboun as a /315/ guaranty until all the provisions of the treaty had been fulfilled (1).

1. The occupation of Chantaboun was to last until January 12, 1905. Cf. below, p. 349.

It seemed that this act, which, generally speaking, satisfied all our requirements, would settle once and for all the question of the western frontiers of French Indo-China and finally put an end to our irritating difficulties with Siam. This was not at all the case, and it was clearly seen, on the contrary, shortly after its ratification, that its hasty redaction had made it a diplomatic instrument which was absolutely incapable of preventing all disputes in the future.

It first provoked the protests of the British, who were justifiably surprised at not having been consulted concerning the northern limits and who, in order to safeguard their preponderancy in the Sip-Song-Panas, incontinently demanded the creation of a buffer state between its Burmese territories along the Upper Mekong and those along the left bank which Siam had just ceded to us. Furthermore, the clause relative to the establishment on the right bank of a restricted strip twenty-five kilometers wide was too laconic and imprecise not to provoke further disputes, disputes which the uncertainty and weakness of our policies /316/ were to multiply. Finally and above all, for the kingdom of Luang-Prabang the treaty created the paradoxical situation of cutting it in two and making it a half French and half Siamese state. Under these conditions Siam cannot really be blamed for not having allowed any opportunity to escape, in what followed, which might have freed it from such poorly defined obligations, when we had had every latitude to impose our own conditions and all necessary elements for elaborating a definitive set of rules.

175* To make matters worse, the French government neglected to
648* complete so important (although so imperfect) a diplomatic action
642 by means of an agreement specifying its own relationship to the king of Luang-Prabang in accordance with a procedure analogous to the one previously adopted with respect to the other sovereigns who were

proteges of Indo-China. For despite the plentiful information 175*
which Pavie had been able to communicate to Paris regarding the 648*
political status of the Laotian territories, our diplomats had not 642
ceased to regard all these territories, from north to south without distinction, as simple "muongs" which were perpetually in dispute between Annam and Siam and to confuse the chief of a State who was the true legitimate descendant of a long line of kings with the "chaumuongs" of old /317/ principalities which had long since been dismembered (1).

1. This oversight still weighs heavily on the political life of all of Laos, the legal status of which still remains vague. Is it a direct administration or a protectorate? In fact, the representative of France directly administers the provinces whose leaders used to be ordinary chaumuongs, but in the case of Luang-Prabang he grants its king, among other monarchical prerogatives, the privilege of making laws and governing the internal affairs of his territory by means of ordinances. This de facto situation was explicitly recognized in 1917 by a treaty concluded between Governor General Albert Sarraut and King Sisavang-Vong. This treaty, however, coming as it does only from the head of the colony, merely constitutes an administrative act of a domestic Indo-Chinese type. It is to be desired that a diplomatic instrument should be forged -- no matter how tardily -- which on the one hand would sanction once and for all the privileges accorded to the sovereign of Luang-Prabang and, on the other hand, would specify the nature of our administration over the rest of Laos.

In any case, our immediate preoccupation had to be with carry- 648*
ing out the treaty, and with its consequences. Parleys were begun 175*
with Great Britain, and on November 25 resulted in a protocol creating an Anglo-French commission of delimitation. Pavie, while remaining the titular holder of the consulate general in Bangkok, was appointed to preside over this commission together with the Englishman Scott, and to determine our frontier with China from the Mekong to the Red River. Since it was equally urgent to take effective possession of the new territories, Pavie was also /318/ directed to proceed to their organization and was named commissioner general in Laos for this purpose. Finally, he was given the delicate

familiar and grateful greetings of all how much their hearts are 648*
beating in unison with mine, and what goodwill they wish me for 175*
my part labors! What a feeling of magic tranquillity the faces of the old king and queen expressed as they witnessed my return among them to guarantee the new conditions extended to their dear country! What eloquent marks of gratitude in the welcome full of respectful joy which the king their son and the second king made to France's representative and to the friend of the Laotians! How deeply I feel the inexpressible charm of the leader of the Wat-Mai bonzes! My companions experience my own satisfaction and enjoy my happiness!"

Fulfillment of the treaty. Installation of the French commissioner in Luang-Prabang (June 5, 1894). There he again saw Vice-consul Lugan, who had replaced the unfortunate Massie in Luang-Prabang some eighteen months previously, and his "old friend" Vacle who had entered the Indo-Chinese administrative force a little while ago and had recently arrived to take control of the country's internal affairs. Pavie hastened to install the latter officially /322/ as the /642/ government commissioner to the sovereign who was now our protege.

ZAKARINE, king of Luang-Prabang, 1841. KING 1894-1904.

Shortly after the last Siamese agent's departure, Kham-Souk, the 643*
eldest son of Oun-Kham whose health was declining and whose 648*
faculties were rapidly deteriorating (1), had officially assumed 175*

1. King Oun-Kham died on December 15, 1895, at the age of eighty-four.

power under the name of Zakarine, together with his cousin Boun-Khong, the son of Souvanna-Phouma, as Oupahat. He wielded his power "in a carefree yet conscientious fashion, and perhaps also with a certain skepticism which was quite excusable in a prince who had been subject to Siamese intervention for several years and who saw the French domination begin with the partition of his territory and his capital into two parts" (2).

2. Cf. Mission Pavie, "Geographie et Voyages," Vol. V, P. Lefevre-Pontalis, pp. 77-78.

643* Indeed King Zakarine, no matter what his attitude of detachment
648* towards power, was noteworthy for his simplicity, his good sense and
175* his ability to see /323/ the usefulness of certain reforms. For he was
/178/ very poorly seconded by the mandarins of the kingdom council (Senam),
/646/ who were "incompetent men and scoffers dominated by their immediate and individual interests" (1). On the whole, however, the

1. Cf. ibid., p. 78.

642 political and social organization which we found was a good one,
178 and we acted wisely in preserving all the mechanisms of the native administration and in respecting the traditions, customs and mores of the populations throughout all of Laos, insofar as they were compatible with our own institutions (2). This was all the more easy for

2. Thus we were led to suppress radically the slave traffic which was enriching a few Siamese, Cambodian, Laotian and Burmese mandarins. Cf. L. de Reinach, op. cit. /Le Laos (Posthumous edition), Paris, 1911./, pp. 230 ff.

us in that all the Laotian muongs (whether or not they were dependencies of Luang-Prabang) had a similar organization which was a smaller model of that of the kingdom (except for the Senam) and
647 was an obvious vestige of the epic times of Fa-Ngoum and the great
642 State of Lan-Xang (3). Like the king, the governors of /324/
631

3. The following was, in outline, the political organization of the kingdom of Luang-Prabang in 1894:

/643/* At its head the king, the great master of existences (Somdet-Phra-Chao), and the second king, the great master responsible for the preservation of property (Chao-Maha-Oupahat).

Then came the minister princes: the Ratsavong or first prince and right-hand minister; the Ratsabout or second prince and left-hand minister; and the Komakhoune or third and fourth princes and ministers of the center and of the civil services.

The first three mandarins, who bore the title of Phaya,
/646/ were, in order of importance: 1) the Phaya Muong-Sen or
/693/ first right-hand mandarin, head of the Senam and head of of justice; 2) the Phaya Muong-Tiane or first left-hand

mandarin and head of the tribunal; 3) the Phaya Muong- 647
Khang or first mandarin of the center and head of the Serv- 642
ice of public works, transports, etc. 631

The Senam was composed of the Phaya Muong-Khoua or /646/
second right-hand mandarin, and of four councillors under the direction of the Phya Muong-Sen.

The judges or Kromakanes, who were under the Phaya /693/
Muong-Sen and the Phaya Muong-Tiane, numbered seven in all and included the Phaya Muong-Sai or second left-hand mandarin.

Last came the mandarins responsible for the collection of /653
taxes, the assembling of labor drafts and the transport of 644/
bamboo, rattan, thatch and pirogues for the king's service and the public services; then the pages and chamberlains or mahaleks, the military leaders, the functionaries responsible for petty tasks inside the palace, the treasurers, storekeepers, etc.

The reader will note the insignificant position reserved /701/
for the military mandarins in this hierarchy. Of Sam-Sene-Thai's powerful army (see above, p. 56), nothing at all remained.

provinces were aided by an Oupahat, a Ratsavong and a Ratsabout who, like the court dignitaries, gave their orders to the tassengs or canton heads who had authority over the village leaders (naibans). By establishing the different government commissions in Laos Pavie therefore strengthened the native authorities in their age-old prerogatives and the princes of Luang-Prabang in /325/ their dynastic rights and privileges. In order to mark their absolute attachment to France and to give more force to their vehement protests against awarding Siam the part of the kingdom situated on the right bank, the latter insisted on receiving, in solemn fashion and as soon as possible, the investiture of the government of the Republic from the commissioner general. After his return from Muong-Sing eight 643*
months later, Pavie drew up on parchment in Hanoi the titles of the old king Oun-Kham, of King Zakarine, of his brother and of the Oupahat Boun-Khong, and on April 19, 1895 proceeded to this important ceremony.

"All those who had a part in the control of affairs," he wrote as he finished the account of his mission, "were present. The entire populace was invited. In the name of the government of the

643* Republic and by delegation of the governor general of Indo-China, I confirmed the status of the princes in Laos, which had become a French possession. They piously accepted, from the man who loved their country so greatly, the responsibility of continuing under France's authority to lead it with wisdom and goodness" (1).

1. Mission Pavie, "Geographie et Voyages," Vol. II, p. 382.

/326/ Provisory administrative organization (July-August 1894).

642 Anxious to complete the provisional organization of the country and
631 to rejoin the Chinese and British missions of the Upper Mekong, he
647 left Luang-Prabang for the south on July 9, 1894, leaving his second-in-command Lefevre-Pontalis to establish in the north, together with Messrs. Macey and Garanger, the commercial agencies of Xieng-Khong and Xieng-Sen and the future commissions of Poukha and Muong-Ha-Hine (in the two Muong-Hou, while awaiting the imminent delimitation of the territory).

When he passed through Vientiane (July 14) he established M. Lugan in the new province which had been formed of the muongs of Tourakom, Borikane, Patchoum etc. and chose the site of the future commercial agency in Nongkhay. Then, continuing to go down-river, he made contact with the leaders of the left bank (including, among others, at the junction of the Nam-Nhiep, Chao-Kham-Ngon who was the last descendant of Chao-Noi and whom he had recognized as chaumuong of Xieng-Khouang).

In Middle Laos he took all necessary steps to establish the authority of the delegates of the superior resident in Annam over the old circumscriptions of Tran-Dinh, Cam-Lo and Quang-Dinh; to organize the regions of Hinboun /327/ /Page 327 is devoted to an illustration: "Bridge over the Nam-Khane at Luang-Prabang."--Translator/ /328/ (Faureville) and of Song-Khone (Savannakhet); and finally to make ready for the trips of the commercial agents destined for the posts on the right bank at Lakhone-Panom, Ban-Mouk and Kemmarat. Where the river joined the Sebanghien he was joined by the administrator Od'endhal who had just reached Song-Khone, and he agreed with him to extend the administration of this region as far as the muongs of Saravane and Attopeu.

In the south he visited the commercial agency which had been established ever since 1892 at Bassac, and greeted the latter's

phantom king (1) who had remained "under the guardianship of a 642 631

1. Chao-Kham-Souk, one of Chao-Houy's sons (see above p. 168 and p. 177, note 2) who had been placed on the throne by Bangkok in 1863. His fief had been dismembered by the treaty of 1893 and was in reality no longer anything but a Siamese province. He was to die in 1899. 647 /175*/

Siamese agent of an inferior type." At Khong he met Commander Tournier, who had been placed in charge of the Legion troops stationed between Stung-Treng and the islands of Khone, and who was also invested with civil powers in the muongs of the left bank while awaiting the imminent arrival of administrators from Cochinchina (this latter country was to organize the southern Laotian provinces at the expense of its own budget). On August 9 he witnessed the arrival of Lieutenant-commander Simon, the leader of a hydrographic mission /329/ which had been planned the year before by M. Delcasse. This mission was to employ the sloops La Grandiere and Massie and to go on surveillance duty on the Middle and Upper Mekong. With this purpose it was to: 1) trans-ship its cargo at Khone; 2) cross the dangerous defiles of Kemmarat by every possible means; and 3) stop "only where it was materially and absolutely impossible to get through." At the cost of tremendous effort the mission was to reach Luang-Prabang on September 1 and Tang-Ho on October 25, 1895 at a distance of 2500 kilometers from the sea and an altitude of more than four hundred meters (1). On 654 505

1. The bold results of the Simon mission demonstrated the possibility of organizing a regular navigation service from Saigon to Luang-Prabang by using either steam sloops or pirogues, depending on the season. The service was later established.

August 13 Pavie reached Pnom-Penh and then went to Hatien where the gunboat Vipere was waiting for him. The latter took him to Bangkok on the 20th, and scarcely had he landed when he hastened to inform both the Quai d'Orsay and Prince Devawongse of the discoveries he had made all along the Mekong, namely that the treaty had not been made known to the populace and that the king of Siam's proclamation relative to the return of former inhabitants of the left bank of the river to their own country was still unknown 648* 175*

648* 175* everywhere. In the restricted zone on the /330/ right bank troops of soldiers were still circulating and Siamese functionaries had taken the place of the local authorities. In that part of the kingdom of Luang-Prabang which was situated on the right bank of the Mekong there was an obvious attempt -- and one clearly contrary to the treaty -- to transform the region into a Siamese province.

654 Without taking time to argue, he merely cited the fact that Chantaboun was our guaranty and that its evacuation could necessarily not be envisaged until complete satisfaction had been given to our innumerable claims. Then he embarked on September 3 for Tonkin, where he rapidly organized the important campaign which he was to undertake along the upper Black River and the Upper Mekong for the purpose of drawing up a map of the region on the very spot.

654 648* 175* Delimitation of the frontier with China (December 1894). Accompanied by the Messrs. Lefevre-Pontalis, Caillat and Oum, by Commander Tournier, Dr. Lefevre and several topographical officers, and wondrously aided by Deo-van-Tri who took great pride in providing, first in French territory and then in Chinese territory, for provisions at the various stops, for finding coolies and horses, for the chance repairs /331/ which the paths required, etc. (1), he reached

/186/ 1. "Never had our excellent assistant taken more pains to make us succeed. He thus manifested his gratitude not only for the past but also for the present, for he knew that the French government was determined not to cede China any of his territories, part of which the Chinese agents had had hopes of taking from him. He knew that he was indebted to us for having shed light on this question which was such a grave one for him and his people. He loved us all the more for it, and his people vied with their leader in their enthusiasm for us." Mission Pavie, Vol. II, p. 298.

Muong-Le in December where without any difficulty he established the frontier line in full agreement with the two Chinese commissioners. The latter, knowing the place he held in the cantons and the perseverance with which he had steadily aimed at their pacification, manifested a perfectly correct and conciliatory attitude (2).

/642/ 2. The agreement awarded the two Muong-Hou to France.

"The story of Auguste Pavie should be placed in the hands of 000
our youth. It is a magnificent lesson in itself. To the ambitious
it shows how far a desire /338/ to learn combined with the passion
for action can lead; to patriots how one can serve one's country;
and to all how an ardent soul can ennoble the most humble tasks
and, springing from the humblest origins, can rise to the most
honored and most envied posts" (1).

1. Quoted by Colonel Friquegnon. Cf. Bulletin de l'Asie francaise, November-December 1925, No. 236, p. 356.

Final organization (1895-1899). The administrative organiza- 631
tion of the new possession had only been sketched out by Pavie dur- 642
ing his hasty descent of the Mekong. It was taken up and completed
by Superior Resident Boulloche, who was sent out on a mission in
May 1895. Laos was first divided into two territories or commands:

1. Upper Laos, with its capital at Luang-Prabang, including all the Muongs of the left bank situated between Yunnan, the British Shan States, Tonkin, Annam and Cammon exclusively, with the exception of the cantons of the Black River and a large part of the Houa-Phans; the first of these latter were attached to Tonkin and the second to the province of Thanh-Hoa (Annam);

2. Lower Laos, with its capital at Khong, formed of all the regions which had formerly been dependencies of the old /339/ kingdom of Vientiane and which were contained between the Annamitic Chain and the Mekong from Cammon to Cambodia.

A superior commandant was placed at the head of each of these 624
divisions, who was directly responsible to the governor general of 635
Indo-China. Each command was then subdivided into provinces or
"commissionerships" (six for Upper Laos, seven for Lower Laos),
each formed of a group of several muongs and headed by "govern-
ment commissioners" who were then given (except in Luang-Prabang)
the most varied duties and the most absolute initiative -- general
administration, police, taxes, public works, justice, public educa- /647/
tion and even, in most cases, medical help.

In 1899 the two circumscriptions were united under the authority 642
of a superior resident (1) with his seat in Savannakhet (shortly there-

1. Cf. decree of the governor general of February 6 and decree of the President of the Republic of April 19.

after in Vientiane), and unified Laos took its place in the Franco-

642 Indo-Chinese Federation.

The commercial agencies on the right bank, whose number had
439 reached ten, were fully functioning in 1895, but the duties of their
655 directors had been so ill defined /340/ /Page 340 is devoted to a map: "Laos in the Indo-Chinese Federation."--Translator/ /341/ that these posts did not render any real service. No one dared to suppress them officially, however, for fear that Bangkok's agents
/648/ might find an argument in such suppression for aggravating still further their maneuvers among the populace of the restricted zone. France was content merely with removing the directors and placing control of the agencies in the hands of the nearest government commissioners.

Further Franco-Siamese negotiations. Indeed, the Siamese governors did not cease to act in contravention of the provisions of the agreement appended to the treaty of 1893. They particularly endeavored, by intimidation, to prevent the former inhabitants of the left bank who had been transferred to or detained on the right bank from leaving the restricted zone and having recourse to the French agents for help. In Bangkok itself the trial of the Pra Yott had resulted in an acquittal, and an appeal by Attorney General Ducos (1), who was sent to Siam specially to draw up the indictment,

1. Attorney General in Hanoi. Later he was lieutenant-governor of Cochinchina (1896-1897) and superior resident in Cambodia (1897-1901).

and the formation of a mixed tribunal had been needed to obtain conviction of the guilty party. As for the incident /342/ of Tong-Xieng-Kham, criminal proceedings in the case were always suspended! Yet in the course of a voyage to Europe King Chulalongkorn had had a long conversation in Paris in 1897 about the consequences of the treaty with Foreign Minister Hanotaux, to whom he had given the most reassuring promises. In 1899 Governor General Doumer had returned this visit in Bangkok and, by the terms of the extremely cordial talks which he had with the chief officials, he had believed as he left Siam that a final agreement was imminent. All these courteous gestures, however, had not been followed by any change in the attitude of the Siamese agents on the Mekong, and Minister Defrance continued to formulate constant claims...

149: Reinach--1 G-3 (no date) 1901 AM1 Indochina
Laotians AM8
Colonial

[1] [Illustration here]

CHAPTER I

175 101 642 468

THE POLITICAL STATUS OF LAOS FROM THE BEGINNING OF THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY TO THE CAPTURE OF VIEN-TIANE IN 1827

At the beginning of the eighteenth century the territories situated in the basin of the Mékong River were designated by the name of Laos or Lao, and from the political point of view formed two autonomous States.

Their autonomy was much more apparent than real, and existed in fact only for the internal administration of the two kingdoms. As far as their foreign relations went, they were tributaries of the more powerful nations which surrounded them.

The kingdom of Luang-Prabang (or Lan-Xang--of the million elephants) was the northernmost of the two and bordered on Yunnan, Tonkin, Annam, Vien-Tiane (or Vieng-Chang), the Burmese States [2] (or Sib-Song-Pahn-Na) and the You-Eun States (or Lao-Xieng). It was supposed to provide China, Annam and Siam, either annually or every three years, with tribute consisting of certain valuable products and of precious metals, and called "Gold and silver flowers."

The other, or kingdom of Vien-Tiane, was the southernmost and was bordered on the north by Luang-Prabang, on the east by Annam, on the south by Cambodia and on the west by Siam. It was the tributary of Annam and Siam in the same right and under the same conditions as the first.

This state of affairs was profoundly modified in the beginning and middle of the nineteenth century by various events of capital importance.

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At the end of the eighteenth century and the beginning of the nineteenth the Thai kingdom, or Siam, had often appealed to the Laotian princes for help in repulsing Burmese invasions or repressing the insurrections of Ngiéous, Shans and You-Eûns which were frequent at this time. The princes' devotion was ill rewarded. Around 1825, in fact, when the kingdom of Vien-Tiane seemed to want to shake off Siamese suzerainty, it saw its territory invaded by Siamese armies. After two years of war the land had been dismembered, depopulated

631 Upper Laos contained six commissionerships and Lower Laos seven.
175 Each was directed by an official with the title of Government Commissioner [Commissaire] (similar to the title of "commissioner" in British possessions). He was assisted by a clerk, scholars and a native interpreter.

Because of their many and varied duties, government commissioners must have extensive knowledge. In fact, these officials are responsible for general administration, police, collecting taxes and duties, selling opium, public works, justice, public education and, in centers without doctors, for the health service.

A further factor to complicate their task is that the circumscriptions are large and communications difficult.

847 Just as in physiology "the function creates the organ," so must our agents become topographers, naturalists, geologists, engineers, architects, etc. all at the same time. Each of them devotes his talents to the task, striving to do his best and able to count only on himself. [275] [Illustration] [276] [Blank page] [277] Their task is facilitated, however, by the zeal and specialized knowledge of the clerks and leaders of the native guard, who are inspectors and chief guards, former officers or sub-officers of the army. Most of these agents have been on campaigns in Algeria or in the colonies and are used to shifting for themselves, to use an expression which is as apt as it is picturesque.

To this system of individual initiative Laos owes the fact of possessing comfortable, durable and healthy installations built of wood, brick or cobwork which certain other colonies, although better endowed from the point of view of the availability of many technical services, did not possess to so high a degree after they had been established for ten years.

631 Present organization. By decree of the Governor
642 General dated February 6, 1899, the two divisions of Laos were joined and a united Laos was placed under the authority of a Superior Resident (1) named by decree of the President of the Republic. This same ed[illegible]

(1) The enlightened choice of the Government fell on Lieutenant-colonel Tournier, former Superior Commandant in Lower Laos.

abolished the positions of Superior Commandants in Upper and Lower Laos.

Like Cochinchina, Laos is a direct dominion, but is administered according to the forms of a strict protectorate and therefore does not

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have any elected councils or parliamentary representation. Today 631
it constitutes one of the five states in the Indo-Chinese union.

A consequence of the unification of Laos was its division into 631
provinces and the incorporation of its officials, who had heretofore
been a staff apart, in the ranks of the Indo-China Civil Service.

The government commissioners have therefore become civil
service administrators.

Today each of the fourteen provinces of Laos is placed under the 635
authority of an Administrator, and the latter is seconded by a civil
service clerk.

Native guard. In Laos there are no detachments of the 701
troops stationed in Indo-China, but only a native civil guard [278]
composed partly of Annamites and partly of Laotians. It constitutes
a police force which is distributed in detachments of varying size
under the command of inspectors and chief guardsmen. It is entirely
at the disposition of the administrators who are heads of provinces.
This native guard numbers twenty-seven inspectors and chief guards-
men and 850 men, of which 320 are volunteer Annamite enlisted
men recruited in Annam and Tonkin, and 530 are natives recruited
from all the races of Laos. It may be called on to lend its support,
if the need arise, to the native authorities who are responsible for
maintaining order and security in their respective territories. Peace
and order are so perfect in Laos, however, that one can go about
freely without an escort.

The treasury service. The treasury service in Laos 652
is headed by a bursar who holds the title of "Chief Bursar of the
Treasury Service in Laos." He handles all matters dealing with re-
ceipts, expenditures and treasury operations in Laos in the same
forms and according to the same rules as the other bursars who are
heads of services in Indo-China.

He is assisted by a deputy bursar.

These two agents reside in Vien-Tiane.

Medical service. This service includes three colonial 744
physicians on detachment in Laos who are in charge of the infirmaries
at Luang-Prabang, Vien-Tiane (formerly at Pak-Hin-Boun) and Khong.
They care for all sick persons, whether European or native, as has
been noted above (1).

(1) See Chapter III, Health Service.

567 as early as March of 1898, in a report which we believe it will be of
426 value to reproduce in part, as well as a code of rules as ingenious as they were just governing slavery for debt (1).

(1) See Appendix XXVIII.

567 Finally, there is a kind of serfdom in Laos which is applied to
563 certain Kha tribes. Thus in the kingdom of Luang-Prabang, subsequent to revolts, entire tribes of Khas were reduced to a state of serfdom and placed under the patronage of the king, of princes, or of the principal members of the nobility. In 1894 our administration undertook to liberate these Khas, who are completely free today. In southern Laos most of these latter are still the clients of a few nobles or Laotian officials, but the guardianship is a gentle one which they can abandon and resume at will.

2. POLITICAL ORGANIZATION

178 Under our control, as has been noted above, the political
642 organization of Laos has remained what it was before 1893. We have respected the customs and local traditions, and we govern through the native administration in which all the machinery has been retained.

643 [490] The following is a nearly complete list of all the officials in a large Muong such as the kingdom of Luang-Prabang or of Bassac (1)

(1) The kingdom of Luang-Prabang is situated on both banks of the Mekong, but the king resides on the left bank at Luang-Prabang and is consequently dependent on the French authorities. The kingdom of Bassac is today wholly on the right bank, and the king of Bassac falls under Siamese domination. The title of king is sometimes given also to the "Tiao-Fa" or head of the province of Muong-Sing. The head of a muong in the Sib-Song-Pahn-Na may be a "Tso-boua," a "Phya-Hua" or a "Sen-Houi-Fa," depending on his importance.

At the head are the Kings, two in number:

Somdet-Phra-Tiao or Tiao-Tsi-Vite-Louang, first king, great master of existences.

644 Tiao-Maha-Oupahat or Tiao-Tsi-Vite-Vang-Na, second king, great master responsible for conservation of property. [Illustration here]